

# Lyme disease education suggested

By Sam Bari

The Wildlife Committee last week focused on Lyme disease prevention.

At its May 2 meeting, Committee Chairman Chris Savastano asked member Nancy Crawford to draft a letter requesting that the Town Council vote on the committee's recommendation and approve funds to print brochures and a flyer to inform residents and visitors about the dangers of Lyme disease.

The flyer, which will be inserted in the Jamestown Press, and brochure are designed to educate and inform the public about prevention, detection, and how to take precautions against contracting the possibly deadly infection. Lieutenant William Donovan, the police department liaison to the committee, suggested inserting the flyer in utility bills as an added method of distribution.

Crawford wrote an article published in the April 13 edition of the Press warning readers of the upcoming and dreaded tick season, ticks being the primary carriers of Lyme disease. Deer ticks lurk in the woods, on lawns, and

other areas of the outdoors. Since this area of New England has the highest incidence of Lyme disease per population in the United States, the committee feels it is the duty of the town to be responsible and inform residents and visitors alike about the perils of contracting the infection. "Now it's even more important that we make the information available and visible. The tourist season is beginning," Savastano said.

Crawford noted that the President of the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association, George Warner, approved Lyme disease prevention brochures being placed in the Lighthouse in plain view of visitors to the state-owned park.

"Nancy Crawford and I attended the lecture at the Jamestown library by Lyme Disease Foundation Director Thomas Forscher on April 11," Savastano said. "A lot of new information was made available, particularly about permethrin-based repellents that have proved to be very effective. Repel is one brand name that is on the market today," he added. "We've had the

wake-up call. People have to take Lyme disease seriously and clean up their yards, protect their pets with Front Line, and constantly check their children for ticks when they come in from playing outside," Savastano noted.

The committee also discussed the changes in hunting rules that were recommended to the Town Council for presentation to the state Department of Environmental Management. The recommendations resulted in an additional tag per season on Conanicut Island. This brings the number of deer tags per hunter to three per season. The Town Council will hold a hearing to legitimize rifled barrels for both shotguns and muzzleloaders for the next hunting season, another recommendation by the Wildlife Committee.

The next scheduled meeting of the Wildlife Committee is Monday, June 5.



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